

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending.

I. The Rejection Based on 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kameyama.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is not anticipated by or obvious over the disclosures of Kameyama and request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Applicants respectfully submit that Kameyama et al does not even disclose the use of multiple swelling baths. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have optimized temperatures of multiple swelling baths based on Kameyama. Optimization of temperatures of multiple swelling baths would not have been a recognized as a result-effective variable in view of Kameyama. See MPEP §2144.05.II.B.

It would also not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to place multiple swelling baths, which increase the cost and complexity, and also to set a bath temperature of a swelling bath located at a N th position from the front-stage side at a temperature, which is higher than a bath temperature of a swelling bath located at a $(N+M)$ th position by 3°C or more, on the basis of the disclosure on Kameyama.

While, as set forth above, it is believed the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness, to advance the prosecution of the case, Applicants note that Applicants' specification includes evidence showing the improved properties of the presently claimed

methods of fabricating polarizing films. Applicants submit that their comparative data of the specification is closer in scope to Applicants' claimed invention than the cited art.

Examples 1 to 7 and Comparative Examples 1 to 7 are shown in Table 1 of the specification. Among these Examples and Comparative Examples, Examples 1 to 7 and Comparative Examples 4 and 7 show the case that multiple swelling baths (the first swelling baths and the second swelling baths) are placed. Referring to Table 1, the difference between the bath temperature of the first swelling bath and the bath temperature of the second swelling bath in each of Examples 1 to 7 and Comparative Examples 4 and 7 is shown as follows:

- Example 1: Temperature difference is 12°C (i.e. 40°C - 28°C)
- Example 2: Temperature difference is 22°C (i.e. 50°C - 28°C)
- Example 3: Temperature difference is 10°C (i.e. 40°C - 30°C)
- Example 4: Temperature difference is 5°C (i.e. 35°C - 30°C).
- Example 5: Temperature difference is 12°C (i.e. 40°C - 28°C)
- Example 6: Temperature difference is 22°C (i.e. 50°C - 28°C)
- Example 7: Temperature difference is 10°C (i.e. 40°C - 30°C)
- Comparative Example 4: Temperature difference is 0°C (i.e. 30°C - 30°C).
- Comparative Example 7: Temperature difference is -5°C (i.e. 30°C - 35°C).

As described above, the difference between the bath temperature of the first swelling bath and the bath temperature of the second swelling bath is 3°C or more in each of Examples 1 to 7. On the other hand, the difference between the bath temperature of the first swelling bath and the bath temperature of the second swelling bath is less than 8°C in each of Comparative Examples 4

and 7. As shown in Table 1, polarizing films having low color irregularities and high quality can be obtained in Examples 1 to 7 (the temperature difference is 3°C or more). On the other hand, the color irregularities of dyeing occur in polarizing films of Comparative Examples 4 and 7 (the temperature difference is less than 3°C). The above data establishes that changing the bath temperature of consecutive baths by 3°C or more as claimed would result in unexpectedly improved polarizing films.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-7 is neither taught by nor made obvious from the disclosures of Kameyama and it is requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that their claimed invention is allowable and ask that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that this case is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local exchange number listed below.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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